

REMARK**Regarding the Claim Objections:**

The objected claims are obviated by the above Claim Amendments.

Regarding the Double Patenting:

Claims 33 through 38 are canceled, which are rejected on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting. Thereby, the Double Patenting is not valid anymore.

Regarding the Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a):

The ground rejection of claims 23 to 27 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kim (U. S. Patent No. 6,860,672) in view of Kunoki (U. S. Patent No. 5,127,763), and claim 28 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kim in view of Kunoki, in further view of Harris (U. S. Patent No. 3,701,555) are null and void by the above claim amendment.

The ground rejection of claims 29, 30 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Harris (U. S. Patent No. 3,701,555) in view of Kunoki (U. S. Patent No. 5,127,763), and claim 31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Harris in view of Kunoki, in further view of Kim (U. S. Patent No. 6,860,672) are also null and void by the above claim amendment.

The major components of the present invention are that (a) a base sleeve (2, 2b) forms semi-cylindrical shape of dual cavities with lateral and top openings (23) along with axial direction for seating the first and second reinforcing bar (1, 1a) laid in parallel, (b) a cover sleeve (3, 3b) forming dual arch shaped cut-outs for fitting the semi-annular ribs (12) of the first and second reinforcing bars (1, 1a) and a flat top surface (33) at opposite side, and (c) a wedge (4, 4b) having gradually decreasing thickness along with the axial direction, and a pair

of locking sections (45) along with both edges (46) for firmly coupling the first and second reinforcing bar (1, 1a).

The major components of the cited reference, Kim (U. S. Patent No. 6,860,672) are that (a) a **cylindrical sleeve (2)** having a cross sectional area sufficient to accommodate two reinforcing bars (1) inserted through both end openings, (b) **an intermediate pad (3)** forming a semi-circular uneven inner-surface on one-side for mating with said reinforcing bars (1), and a narrow flat surface on opposite-side, and (c) a **wedge element (4)** for inserting to the gap through end openings, at least one side of the wedge element (4) tapered to frictional contact with the intermediate pad (3) and the cylindrical sleeve (2).

As comparing the present invention with the cited reference, Kim (U. S. Patent No. 6,860,672), the difference is that: the base sleeve (2, 2b) of the instant invention forms an opened top with a U-shape for overlapping a cover sleeve (3, 3b) and inserting the wedge (4, 4b) over the cover sleeve.

On the contrary, the cited reference, Kim has a cylindrical sleeve (2) having an ellipse cross sectional area for inserting the bars, intermediate pad (3) and the wedge element (4).

Kunoki (U. S. Patent No. 5,127,763) teaches a clip joint for connecting reinforcing bars comprising a main body of oblong configuration formed a plurality of projections or teeth (4) and a through bore (3-a) for inserting a wedge member (Fig. 7), which is inserted into the through bore (3-a). So that, the wedge member (Fig. 7) is disposed in normal direction with respect to the longitudinal direction of the reinforcing bars. Kunoki fails to teach the sleeves forming an opened top, a cover sleeve and a wedge for locking the sleeve of the instant invention.

Harris (U. S. Patent No. 3,701,555) teaches a clamp for securing the reinforcing bars comprising a tubular split sleeve (21) and a contractor (22). The contractor (22) is slide along the longitudinal direction of the split sleeve (21) for firmly gripping the reinforcing

bars. Harris also fails to teach the sleeves and a cover sleeve as an intermediate member for tightly locking the reinforcing bars of the instant invention.

As discussed so far, the overall features of the present invention are quite different from that of the cited references. Therefore, none of the cited references, Kunoki, and Harris alone or in combination teach or obtain the features of the present invention.

Furthermore, there is no sensible motivation to combine Kim in view of Kunoki and in further view of Harris or Harris in view of Kunoki and in further view of Kim, because the cited references have different configurations.

However, it must be noted that the inventor, Kim of U. S. Patent No. 6,860,672 is the same sole inventor of the instant invention.

Therefore the rejections under the reference, Kim (U. S. Patent No. 6,860,672) are considered wrongful rejections

Consequently, the rejections that are made on the basis of the wrong references must be immediately withdrawn.

Therefore, the applicant believes the present application is now in allowance condition and early Notice of Allowance is respectively solicited.

Respectfully submitted



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